MONTEREY NEWS

OCTOBER 1995

SURE

P. MURKETT

The mound of roots, stumps, dirt, and limbs in the foreground is about as big as Bud and Kathy Rodgers' house in the distance. The devastation of the Memorial Day tornado remains central to the lives of many Montereyans four months later.

Some severe structural damage was caused by the Memorial Day tornado near the intersection of Routes 23 and 57, perhaps *the* ground zero of the whole storm, the place where it took lives by hurling a car into the air, where it spread out wide and its winds were likely at maximum force, flattening acres and acres of trees.

Structural tornado damage can be varied: a roof may blow off and let rain pour into the house and down inside the walls; blowdown trees and windborne objects may hit the structure; windows and doors may explode; the entire structural frame may be twisted and racked by circular winds. It is likely that many or all of these things happened to the homes of John and Maureen Congdon, and Bud and Cathy Rodgers. The houses are located at this notorious and highly visible ground zero.

Little has changed at these buildings since the end of May. After blue plastic tarps were battened down over broken roofs, and insurance companies took care of temporary living arrangements for their clients made homeless, the real work of assessing loss began. Relations with the insurance companies quickly became charged if not adversarial for the Congdons and Rodgers, and the damage necessarily remains untouched until claims are negotiated.

Public adjusters are professional advocates for the insured. They receive a percentage of claims won for their clients. The Congdons contacted a public adjuster after their insurer, Farm Family Mutual of Glenmont, New York, gave them an initial figure of about $30,000 for repairs to their home. Damage includes trees through the roof, cracking in a ground-floor tile wall that may indicate racking of the whole structure, a tipped masonry chimney, and many shattered windows. The Congdons' public adjuster hired an engineer who set repairs at $200,000 after a thorough inspection; Farm Family returned with their own contractor and engineer toward the end of July, and revised their original estimate to just under $50,000. In a letter dated August 4 and addressed to the Congdon's adjuster, Peter Diana of Giordano Associates in East Haven, Connecticut, Farm Family wrote that their engineer found "no evidence that the building underwent or sustained interior damage as result of the winds or vacuum caused by the tornado. The damage to the structure was caused by the falling trees which fell on the structure. It is the Geisser Engineering Corporation opinion that the house did not sustain any severe structural damage such as racking of the framing which would question the structural capacity of the house." Thomas

Czapienski, a Senior Claims Representative for Farm Family and the author of the letter, declined to comment on the case for this report after some consultation with others in his company.

Negotiations between Mr. Diana for the Congdons and Farm Family continue. Following terms spelled out in the insurance policy, their inability to agree on the amount of loss requires that each hire an appraiser; the appraisers will choose an umpire, and each appraiser will set the amount of loss separately; if they reach agreement, that will be the amount of loss; if they can't, they will submit their differences to the umpire, after which a decision agreed to by any two will set the amount of loss.

Bud and Cathy Rodgers received an initial report from their insurer, Commercial Union, based in Boston, which claimed that the house had no structural damage that couldn't be fixed with hurricane clips and simple repairs to broken rafters, torn sheetrock, etc. Bud says the Boston engineer sent by Commercial Union to inspect the house walked up the drive with him looking at the two-foot-thick white pines snapped off fifteen feet up and said, "They'll grow back, won't they?" He hired a public adjuster at the beginning of July.

The Rodgers say that exterior walls are as much as three inches out of plumb after the tornado; Commercial Union has claimed in writing that the structure is "out of plumb within acceptable tolerances." Sharp differences over the significance of readily observed conditions characterize the early exchanges between insured and insurer in these situations; they indicate the length of the tortured path to final settlement, which needs to address genuinely complex questions: When is a loss total? What is the cost of protracted negotiation—to the insured, who endures continuing disruption of normal life, to the insurer, who pays more for prolonged use of temporary housing, and to all for legal extrication? When is thorough repair more costly than razing a damaged structure and starting over?

The Rodgers' independent agent, Steve Kelsey at Leo Mahoney Insurance in Pittsfield, said from his car phone that he agrees with the need for a public adjuster when a claim is large and complex; an experienced professional gets the best settlement, although negotiations for a claim well upward of $50,000, like this, take a long time, according to Steve.

The Rodgers have "twenty years of our life in this house," and sound unwilling to settle for anything they consider less than complete satisfaction just to be done with it.

Perseverance will be essential. Bud applied to the Small Business Administration for a loan to his carpet and upholstery cleaning business, which he had operated out of his place. The response was prompt and positive, except that without an insurance settlement on the real estate, he had no collateral with which to back up the loan, and his file went into the freezer.

By summer's end the Rodgers family needed a break. Bud and Cathy booked a short trip to Bermuda for them and their children, Ian and Rachel. Then hurricane Felix came along. Two days from scheduled departure, the airport was closed and Bermuda was enduring classic hurricane punishment: high winds, high seas, and torrential rain. The travel agent politely informed them that as long as planes could fly in and out, they were contractually bound to take the trip or forfeit their money. When the airport was still closed the day before they were to leave, they decided they had had enough bad weather for one year, regardless of whether travel opened up at the absolute last minute (next day it did). They told the agent they would not go, and refused to pay for not going; their refusal made its way up the corporate hierarchy. They finally won satisfaction when they suggested that the story might make good press, something under the headline, "Travel Agency Sends Tornado Victims Into Hurricane." In the end, it was no vacation. The Rodgers continue living in an insurance-rented house in Lenox, where Ian is now in school. Rachel is away at Wheaton College. They miss Monterey, and will come home as soon as possible, on good terms.

Finally, the issue of view tax has been a ripe subject for jokes since the tornado opened up some woods so thoroughly, giving properties lately tucked away the sort of vista that commands big bucks in the Berkshire real estate market. Jokes aside, over the next year or two the assessors will have to consider the balance on a given property between the positive value of an enhanced view long-term and the negative value of the devastation still in the face of many property owners. A bill now pending in the state legislature would allow abatements for property owners who had structural and/or woodland damage as of the date of the tornado. The normal valuation date is January 1. Local assessors cannot grant abatements without this legislation, but applications can be completed and filed now to ensure prompt action should the legislation pass, as is expected.

—Peter Murkett

Pay Attention to Prevention

Monterey Family Health Fair

Saturday, October 7, 1995 in the Monterey Fire House

10 a.m. – 2 p.m. Admission Free

Co-sponsored by Berkshire Visiting Nurse Association,
the Monterey Board of Health, and the Monterey Council on Aging

The tornado did minor damage to three outbuildings, a lamp post, a chimney, and rail fencing at the home of Nick Monjardo and Lydia Meister on Corashire Road. It totally destroyed a few acres of woods surrounding the driveway between the house and the road. After clear-cutting, trucking away the sawlogs and firewood, digging the stumps and bulldozing, it took weeks of handwork at the corners of the day and the ends of the week raking, picking roots and stones, seeding and mulching to make the new meadow now growing under this blanket of mulch hay. Total cost, about $20,000, paid for privately with help from friends and relatives, as well as small sums from the sale of sawlogs and insurance, and lots of help of every kind from friends, volunteers, and neighbors.

THE TOWN

Donna Burkhart resigned as Monterey's representative to the District School Committee in a letter to the Select Board dated September 21. She wrote: "With deep sadness but absolute clarity, I hereby resign my position as representative to the District School Committee, effective immediately.

"I do not have the wisdom nor the stamina to effectively serve the people of my town in the present climate of mistrust and loss of higher vision."

The Select Board has scheduled a public hearing to establish the percentage of the local tax levy to be borne by each class of property for the Fiscal Year 1996, as requested by the Board of Assessors. The hearing will be held on October 2, 1995, at 8 p.m. in the Town Offices.

At its meeting on September 18, the Select Board voted unanimously to appoint Cathy Roth to the Cultural Council for a two-year term.

The Town will receive a check in the amount of $6,643 from the Massachusetts Interlocal Insurance Association for damage to the town shed and loss of salt caused by the May 29 tornado.

There will be a public hearing on Monday, October 23, at 7 p.m. in the Town Hall regarding the site location for the Monterey Transfer Station. The Department of Environmental Protection has determined that the present location on Gould Road is suitable.

On Friday evening, September 15, in a meeting of little more than thirty minutes, Monterey voters approved Article 1 by a vote of 47 to 3. The article called for the purchase of 3.5 acres of land contiguous to the Corashire Cemetery. According to Select Board member Stefan Grotz, remaining available space in Corashire Cemetery is limited to 132 plots, while this purchase will ensure the town's needs for the next forty or fifty years.

Asked why the land behind the fire station already owned by the Town could not be used, Select Board member Peter Brown explained that that particular land would require extensive and expensive digging up of rock before it could be used as a cemetery. Purchase of the land, previously owned by the Peet family, was contingent on voter approval to disallow the $50,000 levy limit. Approval passed 66-11.

Article 2, to amend the town bylaw concerning solid waste management by establishing a $25 fine per violation was passed over as being out of order because Massachusetts law requires a public hearing prior to assigning specific fines.

Article 3 called for amending the Town's appropriation for the Southern Regional Berkshire School District Operating Budget from $552,524 to $537,288, and amending its appropriation for the SBRSD Capital Appropria-

tion from $193,830 to $187,657. These amendments reflect increased state aid. Donna Burkhart, School Committee member, said that further reductions of the school budget were still very much up in the air. She feared more cuts might be impossible. [Since the meeting, an additional $50,000 has been cut.]

Article 4, to raise and appropriate the sum of $10,000 for the purchase of computer software for the Town Accountant and Treasurer, passed.

— Jane Black

JOINT HAZARDOUS WASTE COLLECTION A POSSIBLITY

The Southern Berkshire Solid Waste Management District and the town of Great Barrington are in the process of organizing a joint hazardous waste collection day. Our coordinator, Susannah Leigh, and Great Barrington are presently going over bids. Joining forces will reduce costs considerably.

If all goes well, the collection will take place on October 21 or 28 at the state garage on Route 7 near Sheffield.

There should be plenty of publicity beforehand as to final date and what materials will be accepted, but meanwhile make a note of the following: anything labeled "CAUTION Keep out of reach of children," or labeled with remedies for exposure or ingestion, as well as oil based paints, varnish, shellac, wood stripper, pool chemicals, acids, fungicides, herbicides, insecticides, flea and tick products, floor wax and furniture polish, poisons, chemistry sets, and oven cleaner will be accepted.

Latex paint is not hazardous, but should be dried out before disposal. Our transfer station now accepts and recycles motor oil, oil filters, anti-freeze, tires, and car batteries, so these items will not be accepted. Household batteries are no longer made with hazardous materials, therefore they also will not be accepted.

— Joyce Scheffey

COUNCIL ON AGING

Plans for the upcoming Family Health Fair are progressing nicely. Exhibits will fill the Monterey firehouse on Route 23. There is ample parking; visitors will enter the firehouse through the side door, and find tables for registration and general information located to the left at the end of the entrance hallway. This fair is free and open to all residents of South Berkshire County. Refreshments will be provided by the Monterey Grange No. 291.

In the following complete list of exhibitors, numbers are the booth display numbers that will be posted at the fair:

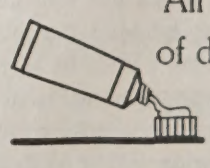
1. Blood Pressure Screening (Berkshire VNA)
2. Blood Sugar Screening (Berkshire VNA)
3. Blood Cholesterol Screening (Fairview Hospital, Ann Marie Hamm, RN)
4. Glaucoma and Visual Acuity Screening (Dr. Moore, Ophthalmologist)
5. Hearing Screening (Rena Jacobson, Audiologist, Office of Dr. Loiodice)
6. Ostomy and Related Skin Problems (Kelli Milne, RN, Berkshire VNA)
7. Oral Screening (Dr. Jerrold Raab, DDS, PC)
8. Height and Weight Screening (Berkshire VNA)
9. Skin Screening (Dr. Cathy Anderson, Dermatologist. Noon–2 p.m. only.)
10. Chiropractic (Dr. David Godwin)
11. Rehabilitation, PT/OT (Berkshire VNA)
12. Foot Screening (Dr. Jeffrey Feldman, Podiatrist)
13. American Cancer Society (Sue Farnum, RN)
14. Maternal and Child Education (Alison Nash, RN, Berkshire VNA)
15. "Healthy Feet" (Lois Simonds, RN, Berkshire VNA)
16. First Responders (Monterey Fire Company)
17. SHINE—Serving Health Information Needs of the Elderly (Terry Koldys)
18. Rape Crisis (Judith Rosso, Rape Crisis Center of Pittsfield)
19. Fitness Screening (Bobbie Ransom, Fairview Hospital)
20. Yoga (Karen Allen, Berkshire Mountain Yoga)
21. Breast and Cervical Studies Project HEROA (Nancy Clemons)
22. Prostate Cancer Awareness (Sara Patella, Elder Services, Pittsfield)
23. Refreshments (Monterey Grange No 291)
24. United Way of Berkshire County (Dan Dillon)
25. La Leche League (Maureen Meier)

Pay attention to prevention and pass the word!

National Depression Screening Day will be held Thursday, October 5, at the Mary Spitzer Center, 116 Ashland Street in North Adams, 1–3 p.m. The NDSD program consists of a short lecture on depression, a video, a written self-rating scale, and a brief screening with a mental health professional. The program is appropriate for all age groups. NDSD does not attempt to offer a diagnosis; rather it is an opportunity to point out depressive symptoms. The screening will last approximately two hours. For further information, contact Sandra Lamb at 413-662-3125.

Flu shots will be given by the Berkshire Visiting Nurse Association on Tuesday, October 17, 9–11 a.m. in the basement at Town Hall. Pneumococcal shots will also be available. Blood pressure will not be taken that day.

— Pauline Nault

DR. JERROLD RAAB
Dentist
All phases of dentistry

528 - 6520
Route 23 Monterey

NATIONAL GUARD ARRIVES

On Saturday, September 16, a corps from the 101 Engineering Battalion, 42nd Infantry Division, and a detachment from 1-D Company of the National Guard officially arrived in the Monterey area to finish cleaning up the extensive tornado damage on River Road. Equipment had already been brought in the night of September 14. In a press conference televised by Channel 10 and held in front of the home of Glynis Oliver and Will Marsh, which is surrounded by acres of flattened trees, County Commissioner Paul Babeu (also a lieutenant in the Guard) introduced Fire Chief and local Emergency Manager Ray Tryon, Select Board members Gige O'Connell and Stefan Grotz, and State Representative Chris Hodgkins, who was largely responsible for arranging the National Guard assistance.

Captain David Scott said that the corps of twelve men will be on active duty for thirty days, working five-day weeks to clear the area of blowdown debris, a potential fire danger which has been exacerbated by the drought, and to build firebreaks. Representative Hodgkins said he was glad to be of help in cutting through bureaucracy to bring the Guard to Monterey, while Grotz and O'Connell expressed the Town's gratitude for the assistance. "It is great to see such united state and local effort," said O'Connell. Chief Tryon, who has been a tireless leader of the local clean-up, commented that accomplishing the task he has would have been impossible without such community support.

The town is very grateful.

— Jane Black

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ATTORNEY AT LAW

312 MAIN STREET
GREAT BARRINGTON, MA 01230

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HOME: (413) 528-4519
FAX: (413) 528-5165

DEFIBRILLATOR FEATURED AT HEALTH FAIR

The Monterey First Responders (Fire Company members) will have a booth of their own at the Family Health Fair featuring two crucial aspects of dealing successfully with heart attack: widespread CPR training, and a defibrillator.

CPR is cardio-pulmonary resuscitation, the technique of chest massage and forced breath that can revive a person who has stopped breathing and is without a pulse after a heart attack. A speedy response is the key to success, and CPR training for family members and others close by who can help a stricken person immediately is in turn the key to a speedy response. For this reason the Fire Company will offer a free course in CPR to Monterey residents again this November, same as last year. Classes will be held on Monday and Tuesday nights, November 6 and 7, 7–10 p.m. No more than twenty-five people can be accommodated (last year's class was fully enrolled, and some had to be turned away), so early registration is recommended. Please commit to both nights, as all the class time is necessary to complete the course. You can register at the Health Fair, or by calling Mike Marcus, Medical Officer of the Monterey Fire Company, at 528-4115. All who complete the course will be certified to administer CPR.

In some cases CPR cannot restore a healthy heartbeat. When tachycardia or ventricular defibrillation occurs, a device that electrically shocks the heart back into a normal pattern is essential to life-saving efforts. The Fire Company would like to purchase a defibrillator, and Monterey First Responders are prepared to train in its use. It works like this: electrodes are taped to the body of a person in cardiac arrest, and an integral monitor provides an EKG with an advisory readout for the operator, who is trained to recognize the patterns of regular as well as dangerously erratic heart rhythms; the restorative shock is administered as necessary, and discontinued when the heart resumes beating normally on its own. Qualified users are recertified every three months.

The nearest defibrillator now is in Great Barrington, and the twenty-minute difference could cost a life. At the Fair you can see the Lifepak 300, a state-of-the-art machine manufactured by the Physio-Control Corporation. To purchase a Lifepak for Monterey, the Fire Company will be asking voter approval of a $7,000 appropriation at the next special town meeting (not yet scheduled). They hope for strong support, a commitment from voters to match theirs in bringing a critical new life-saving capability to all Monterey residents.

CIDER
On the Grounds of Gould Farm in Monterey
crafts, picnic foods, fresh cider, pie eating, hay jumping,
apple bobbing, pumpkin carving, wagon rides,
a petting zoo & an evening contra dance under the stars
Music by: Vikki True & the Sweet Sisters of Mercy
The Big Waaagh Scratch Band
Anson Olds
Tickets: $6/adults, $2/children
call 413-528-1804 for more information
Gould Farm's
Fall Country Fair
Sat., October 7, 4pm-9pm

MONTEREY TORNADO RELIEF FUND

The thoughtfulness and generosity of our community and its friends, far and near, continues. The Tornado Relief Fund had reached $25,000 by late September, a sum amassed, mostly, from many small donations. Jane Bowles, Stella Bodner, and Andrea Dunlop met with the Select Board to make their recommendations for distribution based on need, after meeting with everyone who suffered property damage in the storm. Checks should be mailed out by mid-October.

Very special thanks to Monterey photographer Meryl Joseph, who has given her time, effort, and talent to create a set of nine photo post cards which sell for $10 at Roadside Store and the Hayloft Gallery, proceeds to the Monterey Tornado Relief Fund. The cards show several scenes of tornado devastation. Meryl had help in this project from her neighbors Eric and Holly Montgomery, and from Kwik Print in Great Barrington.

Our hats off to all, and keep the funds coming—they're still needed! If you have any questions, call Greta Cherneff, 528-2949, or Marjorie Jaffe, 518-484-2161.

— Greta Cherneff

MONTEREY PRESERVATION LAND TRUST

At its annual meeting in August, the Monterey Preservation Land Trust elected the following officers and Board members: Andrea Dunlop, President; Roger Tryon, Vice-President; Robert Emmel, Clerk/Secretary; Joyce Scheffey, Treasurer.

Board members are Fred Chapman, Christopher Dunlop, Storrs Olds, and Eric Roper. The Board is pleased to welcome new member Gige O'Connell.

It has been a good year for the Trust and open space preservation in Monterey. We received an anonymous donation of a small parcel on Lake Garfield accompanied by a cash contribution for enforcement of restrictions. We are grateful to the individuals for both gifts. We are also pleased to announce the acquisition by the Turkeybush Foundation of a ninety-acre parcel along Wallace Hall Road. The conservation restriction will be jointly held by the Trustees of Reservations and MPLT.

MAGGIE LEONARD

At the annual meeting members voted to offer the Town of Monterey $2,500 in support of the acquisition of a segment of land adjacent to Corashire Cemetery for enlargement of the cemetery. The town has received an offer from another source as well to assist in the acquisition.

The ongoing need for MPLT efforts is clear. Each year the United States loses more than one million acres of productive farmland—an area larger than Delaware—to development, as well as countless acres of wetlands and animal habitat. While loss of farmland represents a significant crisis in itself, the value and need for preserving undeveloped open spaces is inestimable. In the MPLT the Monterey community has something of considerable value—an established land trust organization with more than a decade of hands-on experience ready to assist land conservation efforts in the town.

MPLT welcomes anyone interested in joining. Town residence is not a prerequisite.

Janet Lampman
MPLT Member

TREES TREES TREES
Late summer and fall:
an excellent time to transplant trees.

In our nursery we have
3' - 4' Balsam Fir and Blue Spruce
and in our larger nursery we have
8' - 10' Pine, Spruce, Balsam,
and Apple Trees

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Sat. 9–5:30
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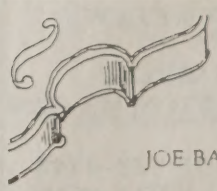
Gt. Barrington, MA 01230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HUNGER MOUNTAIN INSTRUMENTS
BOX 332 MONTEREY, MASS. 01245
(413) 528-9385

CHILDREN'S HEALTH PROGRAM

Playgroups are under way in twelve towns. We welcome new families and new leaders. We have the new site of Camp Eisner for the Great Barrington Playgroup. Playgroups are free of charge, caregivers are asked to stay with children, and children should be following an immunization schedule and be in good health when attending playgroup. Parents are encouraged to participate in playgroup activities as much as possible. For more information, call Miriam at 528-9311.

Due to requests from parents, we are beginning a New Parents Group on October 2, 12 noon–1 p.m. at Russell House, 54 Castle Street, Great Barrington. Loren Kinnaman will coordinate the group. Refreshments will be served. Parents and infants can attend, meet other families, learn of services in the area, and have some questions about caring for babies answered. For more information, call Loren at 528-9311.

Here is a calendar of special activities:

October 5 Children aged twelve to eighteen months and their caregivers are invited to a special playgroup at Camp Eisner in Great Barrington. Child development handouts will be available. Regular playgroup will also take place. 9:30-11:30 a.m.

October 7 & 8 Hands At Work, professional arts and crafts show, St. Peter's Center, East Street, Great Barrington. Saturday, 10 a.m.-5 p.m. Sunday, 10 a.m.-4 p.m. Children's activities, refreshments. Proceeds benefit the Emergency Fund at Children's Health Program.

October 16 Discovery Toy orders due at Children's Health Program. A Discovery Toy party will be held to benefit playgroups. Here is a chance to order holiday gifts for your favorite child. Order forms and books will be at playgroup sites and CHP. For more information, call Miriam at 528-9311.

October 16 Parent to Parent Volunteer Training begins. Russell House, Great Barrington, 5-7 p.m. Training will be held each Monday evening for five weeks. Volunteers are asked to give a year's service. Volunteers will be matched with families in which there is a pregnancy or a child under three years of age. They can help families with transportation, information about area services and child development, and be an emotional support person. For an application, call Claudette at 528-9311.

October 23 Workshop: Appropriate Toys and Homemade Toys for Children Aged Birth to Three Years. Delinda Anderson, Director of First Steps, an early intervention program at CHP, and Cynthia Duryea, Developmental Educator at First Steps. 6:30-8:30 p.m. at the Bear Care Center, 777 Main Street, Great Barrington. Childcare available. For reservations, call Claudette at 528-9311.

October 26 Fall Festival. Great Barrington Playgroup, Camp Eisner, 9:30-11:30 a.m. Fall activities for your children and other families.

October 29 Kite Flying at Monument Mountain High School, 2 p.m. Some kites available. Sponsored by Fathers' Group. All family members welcome. For more information, call Tony at 528-9311.

The Clothing and Toy Exchange opened at a new site, Construct, Inc., Main Street, Great Barrington, on September 14. Families are asked to donate no more than five items at a time to allow volunteers time to sort and display items. Volunteers are needed to help on Thursday evenings. The exchange will be open Thursdays October 12 and 26, 6:30–8:30 p.m. and Saturday, 10 a.m.–12 noon. For more information, call Loren at 528-9311.

— Claudette Callahan

BARRINGTON & MONTEREY JOIN IN TREE RESTORATION

The towns of Monterey and Great Barrington, along with the Great Barrington Rotary and the Great Barrington Land Trust have formed the Tornado '95 Tree Committee to plant new flowering crab apple and sugar maple trees along the roads in areas of the two towns most heavily damaged by the tornado. To date donations totaling $20,000 have been received, and the Committee hopes that funds will continue coming in.

Fifty-five trees will be set in each town by the end of October to complete the first phase of this project. In Monterey the trees will be planted near the intersection of Routes 23 and 57. The target date for planting is Saturday, October 21, and although volunteer heavy equipment will be used to dig holes and set the trees, volunteers with shovels are needed as well. If you would like to help, call Michael Marcus at 528-4115.

Monterey United Church of Christ

Sunday Services · 10 a.m.
(Child care available)

For assistance & information:

Keith Snow (Pastor)	528-5850
Bob Emmel (Clerk, Trustee)	528-1321
Tom O'Brien (Trustee)	269-7471
Judy Hayes (Worship)	528-1874

With a prayer request or to join the Prayer Chain:

MaryKate Jordan	528-5557
Mary or Ray Ward	528-9243
Judy Hayes	528-1874

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POLITICS

State Senator Jane Swift

It gives me great pleasure to inform residents of Monterey that the town has been awarded state funding from two different agencies of the Commonwealth.

First, the Monterey Council on Aging has been given a grant from the Executive Office of Elder Affairs (EOEA) in the amount of $1,000. This money will be utilized to support the Southern Berkshire Elder Transportation Corporation, which provides transportation to grocery stores and shopping complexes to elderly individuals. In addition, it will be used to support a health fair and provide education/outreach luncheons. This grant is awarded annually and is based on population figures from the most recent federal census (1990) at a rate of $3.20 per senior citizen (with $1,000 being the smallest award).

It is my belief that Councils on Aging sponsor many essential programs for the elderly of our community, such as outreach support, social day care programs, and transportation services. Especially for the smaller communities within our district, state assistance is critical to the maintenance of these very important programs.

The second award benefiting Monterey is a grant from the Massachusetts Cultural Council (MCC) totaling $3,150. This funding supports local public programs in the arts, humanities, and sciences. The funding is distributed to the MCC and is then regranted to fund local applications for community cultural programs, as well as a children's ticket subsidy program, called PASS. Any individuals interested in applying for funding should contact the Cultural Council no later than October 16, 1995.

In light of our recent successful efforts to establish various tourist attractions, this type of state funding will play a major role in helping our largest industries to prosper.

I am thrilled to see organizations within small, rural communities like Monterey receiving state assistance, without which residents would not have the benefit of these remarkable programs.

For more information about these issues, feel free to contact my office at 413-442-5240 (Pittsfield) or 617-722-1625 (Boston).

State Rep. Christopher Hodgkins

For as long as I can remember, I have been working hard to make sure that automobile rates in Massachusetts are not allowed to spiral out of control as they have in the past.

I have fought tooth and nail to stop every rate increase that has come down the pike. I have tried to get the insurance authorities to understand that the people in Berkshire County should not belong to the same risk pool as those driving in the metropolitan Boston area. I have supported reform measures which have cracked down on fraud through the creation of the Insurance Fraud Bureau and the efforts in the rate-setting process to penalize insurers for lack of attention to fraudulent claims.

But I must say that I have never had any help from the insurance industry with my attempts to lower the price of automobile insurance. Until recently, that is.

You see, when the auto insurance industry filed a 3.1% rate increase with the Massachusetts Division of Insurance in August, it also filed some pretty incriminating evidence which demonstrates that it doesn't really need the money.

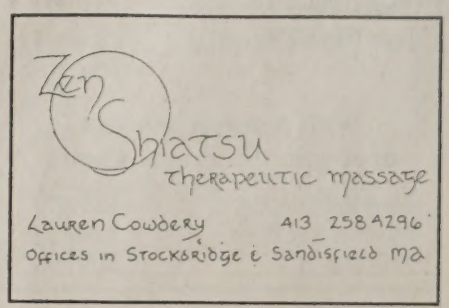
It is a fact that insurance companies already enjoy collecting premiums that cover their costs very well. Massachusetts insurers spent just 60¢ of every premium dollar on claims in 1994, which is down from 77¢ in 1990. Rates, on the other hand, have increased by 16.3% since 1990.

In the paperwork accompanying this year's rate increase, insurance industry officials state that 3.1% increase will only cover the value of disputed actuarial issues left over from the rate increase they were not awarded last year. I find it quite peculiar that this year they only need 3.1% to pay for the same costs that they said they needed 9 percent to cover. That leaves an extra 6 percent the insurance companies were looking to use to pay their bank accounts.

When most people are struggling to pay an average of $900 a year to insure their cars, I don't think there is any reason to allow insurance companies any kind of monetary cushion. On the contrary, I say that it is time for the insurance companies to bite the economic bullet!

There is also more recent evidence demonstrating that the industry has money to spare. It was uncovered in July when the Commonwealth's largest auto insurer, Commerce Insurance Company, asked permission to give all Automobile Association of America members a 10% discount. I feel very strongly that this development is a crystal clear sign that Massachusetts automobile insurance policies are a very lucrative business. And if companies can give a 10% discount to certain drivers, they can afford to give drivers across the board a break just as big.

My testimony to the Division of Insurance stated just that. I have demanded that authorities not only deny the 3.1% increase but also give a 10% reduction in rates statewide. After all, since the insurance companies readily admit they have too much money in their coffers, why not give the money back to the ratepayers who really do need it?



YOUTH HOCKEY UNDER WAY

Berkshire Tri-State Youth Hockey (formerly Sheffield Youth Hockey) is beginning its new season. Boys and girls aged four to fourteen will be skating this year as the Berkshire Rattlers. They learn the game from coaches and instructors (all trained and certified by USA Hockey) who teach athletic skills with more emphasis on fun than winning. The kids skate on the rink at Berkshire School in Sheffield from mid-November until the beginning of March. There's a learn-to-skate program on Saturdays and Sundays that's new this year. For information, call me at 413-528-0762.

— Jed Lipsky

EVENING CLASSES SCHEDULED

On Monday and Wednesday evenings, 6:30-9 p.m., Mount Everett regional school will hold evening classes for community members who do not have a high school diploma.

Basic remediation in math and English, as well as preparation for the Graduate Equivalency Diploma (GED) will be available to all people in the area over age sixteen who have dropped out of school but now want to continue their education. Transportation will be available. Classes begin Monday, October 2, 1995. To enroll, call David Pottle at Mount Everett, 413-229-8734.

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THE BIDWELL HOUSE

Autumn foliage is at its peak, and the woodland setting of The Bidwell House is a perfect place to view the color in an historic setting. Harvest time is upon us also, and the museum will be decorated with the fruits of the heirloom gardens. This historic house and property is a wonderful place to bring out-of-town guests to show them a glimpse of eighteenth-century New England. This year The Bidwell House will extend its season to Sunday, October 15. Tours run Tuesday through Sunday, 11 a.m. –4 p.m. The museum will also keep regular hours on Monday, October 9 (Columbus Day).

MAGGIE LEONARD

On Sunday, October 8, The Bidwell House will host its annual hike along historic Royal Hemlock Road, led by Bob Rausch of Gould Farm. In the eighteenth century this beautiful road was the main route for residents of the settlement of Hop Brook (now the center of Tyringham) to reach the meeting house near The Bidwell House. Hikers should meet on the porch at the museum; hiking clothes and shoes are recommended.

Royal Hemlock Road is just one of the trails that lace the Bidwell property and open the wooded hillsides for recreation and education. With the installation of Loom Brook Trail this summer, the trail system now loops the entire acreage, through hemlock groves, stands of hardwood, an orchard, barn foundations, and the site of the original meeting house. These trails are free to the public and a great asset to Monterey.

— Anita Carroll-Weldon

LAKE GARFIELD ASSOCIATION

Lake Garfield will not be drawn down this fall. The combination of drought and tornado damage have caused an extreme fire danger in Monterey for which the Fire Chief and the Select Board received the consent of the Conservation Commission to discontinue the practice of drawdown this year. Lake Garfield is a major source of water for our fire company. You may need to protect your dock from damaging ice that will form at a level higher than it has been for years.

Reports in *The Berkshire Eagle* indicate that the weevil project tested in Lake Mansfield and Goose Pond this summer has had some success. Pat Edelstein is monitoring it, as well as the Krofta project on Laurel Lake.

Elections will be held at our meeting in June, 1966. We need people interested in the welfare of Lake Garfield who are willing to hold office for two years. Our organizational health depends on fresh minds and viewpoints to help establish a knowledgeable and experienced membership. If you are interested, please don't be shy—let us know. It is not necessary to be a year-round resident to hold office.

Lake Garfield tee-shirts are available in medium, large, and extra-large sizes for just $15 each. They make great gifts and stocking stuffers, and look stunning worn lying on the deck of a cruise ship headed for the Caribbean. Mail your election suggestions and your tee-shirt orders to: Lake Garfield Association, Box 474, Monterey, MA 0-1245.

— Muriel Lazzarini

CULTURAL COUNCIL GRANTS

The deadline for 1995-96 Cultural Council grants is Monday, October 16. The Monterey Cultural Council is appointed by the Select Board to administer state grant money for projects in the arts, humanities, and sciences which benefit the Monterey community. There will be a meeting for interested individuals and organizations on Saturday, September 30, at 3 p.m. in the basement of Monterey United Church of Christ. Bring your ideas and questions. Grant applications are available at the Monterey Town Hall. Mail yours to Julie Shapiro, Chair, Monterey Cultural Council, Box 137, Monterey, MA 01245. Applications must be received by October 16. Questions, call 528-9312.

— Julie Shapiro

INDIAN IN THE CUPBOARD TO PLAY AT MONUMENT

The Actors Theater of Maine, a traveling troupe which boasts a dozen years of performing widely throughout the northeast, will present its adaptation of Lynne Reid Banks' novel, *The Indian in the Cupboard*, in the theater at Monument Mountain Regional High School on Sunday, October 8, Columbus Day weekend. There will be a show at 2 p.m. and another at 6 p.m. Admission is $7 for adults, $5 for children. Parents of the Hevreh of Southern Berkshire Religious School are sponsoring the play to benefit the school's building fund.

Ms. Banks' novel was published in 1980, when it was named "best novel of the year" by *The New York Times*. It tells the story of Omri, a British boy who discovers magic that brings his small plastic action figures to life. The exponential complexities of time travel unfold neatly for children and grownups alike in her deftly wrought story.

Tickets may be reserved in advance by calling Hevreh at 528-6378.

NEW MARLBOROUGH AND MONTEREY SCHOOL NEWS

Just as predictable as the tides, those familiar yellow buses are rumbling through town again. School is open for another year. Classes began August 30 with a combined enrollment of 105 pre-K through fourth grade.

Orientation at New Marlborough Central was held September 13. The evening started with the traditional potluck supper, then segued to a short PTA meeting led by President Julie Kelley. Afterward parents visited classrooms and heard a synopsis of the year's expectations liberally dosed with hopes and dreams.

The excitement is contagious. My goal in writing a local schools column is to let you know about some great kids and the things they are doing right here in our midst.

As this is being written, the PTA is involved in its first fund raiser of the school year. Money raised goes to various enrichment programs. Reading Is Fundamental, better known as RIF, is one such program. Though federally sponsored with $315, the local distribution is generously supplemented by Kiwanis and the New Marlborough/ Monterey PTA. There are four distributions per year according to Debbie O'Brien, RIF coordinator. Each distribution is tied in with a motivational activity to emphasize the importance and relevance of reading. The first distribution will take place in early October with a surprise activity planned. This is a wonderful opportunity for our kids to choose a book for their very own.

Plans are afoot for a Halloween party. Look for notices to be sent home when the time comes. The next meeting will be October 10 at 7 p.m. at the New Marlborough Central School.

— Deborah Mielke

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ON THE ROAD AGAIN

Miss Katy Got Sick

Remember that little pup I yanked into the world ten months ago, the mother Yorkie yelling as I pulled, the father Poodle looking on? That puppy turned into a unique little dog (three pounds, all black, even her eyes), and she came with a college education! My first day in Maine in August visiting my nephew, all ready to go out for a boat trip, I took my four dogs outside "to wash their hands." I put the pup down on the grass. She just lay there. I put her on her feet. She fell down. I called the owner of the boat: "I can't come."

Try to get a veterinary to come to his office at 6:30 Saturday morning. He met me there. He put down on the chart: very sick; severe flea infection; maggot in fur; dehydrated; depressed, yellow color inside ears. He put her on IV feeding.

I took her home after five days...she was some better. I took medicine and her chart. I was due up in northern Maine. Second day there Miss Katy couldn't eat a thing. Some water from an eye dropper and she threw up the medicine, so I located the Brewer Veterinary Clinic. They found the liver wasn't working, put her on IV again, called a big animal clinic near Boston. They couldn't take her for five days.

I left the next morning, putting the pup in a warm sweater, took a different medicine, some special food and another chart. Got down three eye droppers of water every half hour. Stopped for the night with friends in New Hampshire. The next morning I barreled down Route 495, off at Route 9, and drove my camper up to the enormous red brick building in North Grafton, Massachusetts: Tufts University School of Veterinary Medicine. Horses were going through the back door. The pup, lying like a dead dog on the sweater, and I went in the front door, with charts and a referral from Brewer Clinic. "Good morning," I said. "You said you couldn't take this pup until Thursday. She wouldn't live that long. Here!" She answered, "This is going to be an emergency entrance."

As the doctors looked her over, I looked around. The girl behind the counter said, "The bathroom is down the hall, and there is a cafeteria in back." Big signs on the front wall. Emergency Unit: Modeled after similar hospital facilities for humans. Open twenty-four hours, for owners and veterinarians in area, separate and accessible entrance. Surgery Unit: Surgery performed here from simple operations to procedures such as arthrascopes. Special Unit: Nerve, heart and eye problems are treated here. Echocardichy is an ultrasound technique, picture of heart in motion. We treat epilepsy or heart disease. Radiology Unit: Imagery services, including X-ray, nuclear medicine, deltrasound and fluoroscopy (procedures which do not require levels of ionizing radiology—one of four such facilities in the nation, only one in the Northeast). Treatment and Recovery Unit: Case history taken there. Depending on results, may be treated here or sent to another part of the hospital. After routine treatment requiring a recovery period, animal is put in a quiet, comfortable holding cage until it is well enough to be released.

A doctor came out. "May be a hepatic shunt." (Liver.) They wanted to keep her there for four days, take tests, IV, a transfusion. They would call every day. The cost, about $900. You pay half before you leave the dog. I almost swooned but took out three of my credit cards.

I went to visit on the third day. Miss Katy was delivered to me with a large plastic Elizabethan-looking collar, so she wouldn't get at the IV tube. (Visiting hours are 5–7 p.m.!) The doctor told me that sometimes they operate or use medicine. I said, "Release her to me when she is ready to leave the IV. Give me the medicines and instructions. I will nurse her at home."

She has been home about three weeks now. For the first ten days she had to have four different medicines every eight hours. The one at midnight got me down! Now I try to get down all the food I can, a special type of food with no protein (wears liver down). She takes water only in an eye dropper—but races around with the other dogs. Sometimes looks like her old self.

After this racing, she goes to her warm sweater and sleeps two or three hours. So, I don't know...?

—Joan Woodard Reed

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FOOD DISORDER

He came that evening bringing gifts of brownies
Telling me my life

I let him
Because he was on target—mostly

It is nice to listen to the truth
So seldom is it heard

Rhetoric being easy to mimic
Realizing how alike we all are
I told him his
And he let me

Brownies are a great buffer
In that silence when each pauses to wonder if too much was said
Honesty in small doses is more acceptable

When I offer him coffee the gesture is selfish
Partly because I am not quite ready to be alone
Partly because he reminds me of a feeling in another city
Coastlines away

Palm filled skylines against old cemeteries are another story

These little one acts make questionable filler
Like cool whip
Almost all air
But easy to swallow

— Shannon Amidon

NOON

Violets were dropping
out of my mouth
when the boys in black smocks
clattered down the cobbles
little crows
screeching to the stone beach.

The handsome Italian air
lizard-laden with
hot mimosa and golden spice
hung once more beneath
a dome of blue promise
for I was only five
and just alive
with new shoes to my soul
and new socks.

A green branch suspended time
touching the corners of antiquity—
then, my father kissed my mother
and spoke his terrible good-bye.

The church bell tolled twelve tears.
I leaned against the crenulated wall
smelling disaster
trying not to cry.

— A. O. Howell

When words fade
In fractious times
Hold me close
In muscled lines

Grizzled rasp
Scrapes my cheek
As I seek your
Neck's musk clasp

This sighing brief rest
In the corded hollow
Stifles the bellow
Of worldly spite

— Lesley Givet

PRIESTLY OFFICE

He called me in but not my mommy
left her huddled on a long bench in the hall
like a schoolgirl after punishment
shoulders folded high around her pain.

Inside his priestly office
behind his tall closed doors
grey stone dulled behind the whiteness of his hair
vertical columns simulated lines carved in his face
whose weathered Irish skin and chips of ice blue eyes
betrayed the day with color.
Dark brocaded drapes shut out
the steel grey of the sky.

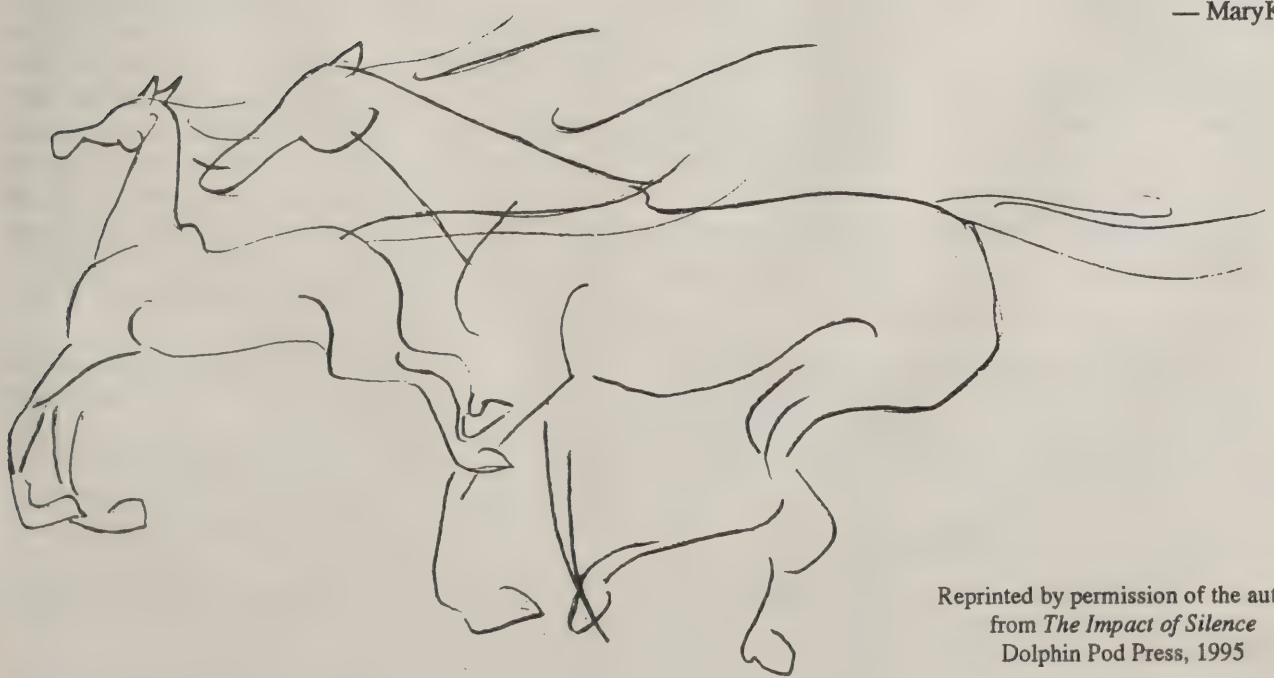
Elbows hard against the oak arms of the chair
I sat formal as the vast wide acres of his desk
spread out before me like some distant planet
terraformed but unfamiliar alien bizarre.
My feet both hovered inches over the carpet.

His Adam's apple bobbed. His wrinkled mouth worked twice.
He cut the air with "letter" "daddy's never" "coming home."
His office walls all slithered toward me
hissing like a mangle on the fabric of my face my
arms hands body while my toes searched for the floor.
The tide pull of his well-trained tones mesmerized
sedated. Then he began to cry and I began a scream I silenced
counting squares of antique glass or spines of books or
something small repeated.

He stood up to walk so I hopped up as well
focused on the sudden door escape hatch
which he opened with his white veined aged hand
disembodied by inflexible black fibers of his cassock.
I fell out of the pressured room into the calm cold hall
where he talked with mommy back and forth above my head
while I put on my rubber boots and walked down granite steps
away outdoors a breath of fresh I never felt beneath my feet.

The scrupulous old priest was like a father to her, Dad.
His cold unyielding ritual of concrete rules for life
strengthened her
assured her that one thing was still all right.
His office was the best she had to offer with you gone.

— MaryKate Jordan



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Dolphin Pod Press, 1995

ESSAY QUESTIONS AND THE COMPANY OF ANIMALS

When I was in school our tests were divided into sections. There would be "fill in the blanks," "multiple choice" (sometimes hilariously called "multiple guess"), "true or false," and finally the dreaded "essay questions." We always felt the essay questions were the real test, the hardest, the place where you had to know your stuff. Of the various forms the essay questions might take, the ones I remember best are the "compare and contrast" variety. Here the author of the test would devilishly pair two testable subjects together. Instead of coming right out and asking us to write all we knew about feudal life in Japan during the Kamakura shogunate, and then giving us another question on feudalism in Europe, we would get them both lumped into the same question. In biology it would be, "Compare the nervous system of the earthworm with that of the giant cockroach." You might know lots about knights but you were in trouble if you didn't know the same kinds of things about the samurai. You might be an earthworm expert but if you hadn't boned up on cockroaches you were out of luck for the whole essay question.

I used to wonder what was the point, but now I think I know. No matter what you study or think about, you'll know it best if you know it in relation to something else. You might even want to compare the daily life of a samurai with that of an earthworm.

I start out my day not with earthworms but with horses and goats. There isn't much conversation, just a lot of parallel eating. I go quietly among them with shovel and wheel barrow and they sort themselves out socially in relation to the three hay piles I have arranged in their barnyard. They eat, I cart manure. They eat, I think about my day, my night, my family. They eat, my mind wanders all around them, always coming back to the shovel, the manure, the gate, the manure pile. After about forty-five minutes of this, I am ready for a day among people.

Back in the house I'll put the radio on. Seems the French are still going to do this incredible thing in the Pacific, racism still defiles our community, and people who did their jobs well for years don't have their jobs any more because somebody else made a greedy mistake. Here in the human barnyard there is a lot more than manure to deal with: there's hard feelings and blame, guilt and despair. You can't clean them up in forty-five minutes, and you wouldn't want them on your garden.

People aren't all bad, and maybe it doesn't do to stack them up beside animals for the compare and contrast question anyway because people are animals, too. Maybe the question is better phrased this way: What can we learn about ourselves from the company of animals?

This I think is the point of the compare and contrast format. The idea is that there is something about the nervous system of the cockroach which can teach us about that of the earthworm. The critical something might be that they are alike in some way, or it might be that they are different. Either way, it will create relationship, which is the best way to study.

When I was growing up it was considered okay to have a female cat which would have kittens. Ours had them in a kittening box in the upstairs hall closet. This was a tiny closet, stuck in by the chimney, and I used to lie half in and half out, visiting the kittens. There was a wholesome contentment in that box, also the smell of baby mammals and warm fur. The mother purred, the kittens purred: she slept, they drank. When my life got complicated, sometimes as a direct result of a devilish essay question, but more often due to plain old human growing pains, I would get myself as far into that closet as possible to join the cat family for a little while. I could get my head right into the box, my face into the welcoming belly fur of the purring mother. What I needed she had plenty of. I could fill up on catly goodness and face the complicated world of humans for another day.

Lately I've traded the kitten box for the barnyard, but I find it works the same reliable way. What is the relationship between the morning chores here on Hupi Road and race hatred, military posturing, and relentless financial ambition in the world of people? I might not get full credit for a one-word answer to an essay question, but the answer is "antidotal."

— Bonner J. McAllester

Monterey Cultural Council

The Monterey Cultural Council is accepting applications from groups and individuals, to promote artistic and cultural activities in and for our community.

Grants

The deadline is *October 16*

Applications are available at the Town Hall. Please mail Completed applications to MCC, P.O. Box 137, Monterey, 01245

MAGGIE LEONARD

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THE OBSERVER - AUGUST

The region remains drought-dry. This month last year we had almost twice as much rain, very near the norm. This August we went without rain for eighteen days, from August 13 until August 31. The rainfall deficiency in Monterey, year-to-date, is now 5.6", based on the regional norm as recorded in Pittsfield. What's more, that year-to-date total includes an unusually heavy January rainfall, much of which ran off the frozen ground. There was little snow last winter, so the water table is very low. Some towns have initiated water conservation restrictions, and an excavator worked for two days dredging silt from the Konkapot behind the dam in back of the General Store to create a larger central reservoir of readily accessible water for fire protection. The danger of wildfire in these dry conditions is heightened by the acres of windfelled trees that remain tangled in the woods after the Memorial Day tornado. The National Guard arrived in mid-September to help clean up the woods and make firebreaks (see story, page 2).

High temp (8/4)	90°
Low temp. (8/20	41°
Avg. high temp.	81°
Avg. low temp.	57°
Avg. temp.	69°
Monthly norm. (Pitts.)	66.6°
Precip. occ.	7 days
Total precip.	2.29" rain
Monthly norm. (Pitts.)	4.46"
High bar. press. (8/3)	30.29"
Low bar. press. (8/12)	29.74"
High humidity (8/12)	98%
Low humidity (8/20)	51%
Avg. wind speed	1.43 mph
High wind gust (8/24)	28 mph

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WILDLIFE SURVEY

Mammals

Bears are now common enough so that a hunting season on them has been inaugurated "to control the population." Some fifty were "taken" in the first week in this general region. Like other animals, they have been more visible lately because of the drought. One came out of the woods and walked peacefully along the road near a hiker on Hupi Road near the old Camp Shalom. They are omnivorously hungry these days to store up fat to see them through their long winter sleep.

Deer, too, are visible. David and Burling McAllester saw a doe and two half-grown fawns walking along the shore of Parker's Cove in Lake Garfield September 11. Dale Duryea saw one of the biggest bucks in his experience with ten-point antlers ("like a bush!") in his own field. On the other hand, the two fawns, still showing their spotted coats, that were killed by cars in Monterey the week of September 11 were the smallest Dale had seen for this time of year. He thinks scarcity of food, due to the drought, may be the reason.

For the same reason, coyotes are in the news. They killed eight sheep on a farm in Cheshire, and there have been complaints of similar depredations in Monterey. Dale has had them coming right up his driveway and to dig up anything edible.

A report came from Gould Farm of a bobcat in one of their marshes; Mary Kate Jordan may have seen the same one September 4 in the late afternoon. It was crossing Gould Road, and at first she thought it was an odd-looking boxer, but the heavy legs and a better view made clear it was a bobcat.

Gray squirrels are unusually enterprising in their food quest. In late August they came into Bonner McAllester's garden in large numbers, decimated the corn patch and even had a go at the squashes. She attributes the incursion to a peak population and the food scarcity. Both squirrels and porcupines are busy in the treetops. The former are knocking a rain of acorns out of the oaks, and the latter are creating a litter of leaves and twigs under the poplars. A good many poplars now have a well-pruned look in their upper branches. Dale reports that the acorns are gone in some sections and the squirrels are desperate. They are taking the apples out of orchards and have broken into some houses by ripping open the screens. He is worried about the effect of the drought on small mammals. He has seen seven dry beaver ponds, and the lack of grass in streambeds may affect the winter storage prospects for muskrats. He did see tracks indicating the usual mink traffic up and down the Konkapot River. Sudi and Cora Baker saw three black squirrels on Blue Hill Road and Hupi Road September 19.

Birds

Ravens are bigger than crows but look so much like them that many Montereyans don't realize we've had a thriving raven population for some years. Their call is more throaty than the sharp bark of the crows, and they indulge in more aerial acrobatics than crows, including somersaults in the air. The latest report of ravens is from Eleanor Kimberley on Town Hill Road, in early September.

Ed Salsitz, on Beartown Mountain Road, wrote September 9: "I have noted very intense feeding on sunflower seeds, primarily by goldfinches. Usually during August there is a marked slowdown in feeding, but not this year. Since mid-August and continuing to the present time, there is virtually continuous feeding throughout the day. I'm going through fifty pounds of seed in a week. Could this be due to the drought?"

Lake Garfield's goose population is sharply down. We haven't seen the fall muster of large numbers getting ready for the trip south. Dale Duryea thinks many have become residents rather than migrants, feeding wherever there is shallow open water and living inconspicuously in small family groups. There have been sightings of black ducks, wood ducks, a grebe, wood thrushes, robins, juncos, doves, hummingbirds, vultures, phoebes, great blue herons, sapsuckers, flickers. This is a time of little song as birds prepare for winter or departure.

Amphibians

The Banner and McAllester ponds have thriving frog populations in spite of the general decline in the numbers of amphibians in general. The latter increment seems to be in response to the absence of a pair of domestic ducks. Now there are pollywogs everywhere and twenty to thirty small- and middle-sized frogs all around the perimeter.

Reptiles

A few garter snakes have been reported, and a good-sized painted turtle, now quite rare, was swimming in Lake Garfield in early September.

Insects

Eleanor Kimberley saw two of the most spectacular of the moths, a lunar

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SERVING MONTEREY SINCE 1955

and a polyphemus, in mid-August. Mosquitoes have been quelled by the dry weather, but there are persistent midges here and there. Yellow jackets have established their underground nests to take the next generation through the winter. Don't linger by a neat hole in the ground with the vegetation chewed away from close around it.

Bryozoa ("Moss Animals")

Like the corals, these tiny organisms live in colonies that often resemble plants. The ones observed in Monterey assemble in large gelatinous masses built up on rocks and sticks in still water. At first look they seem like the egg clusters of frogs or salamanders, but then you notice there's no developing embryo, and then you remember the eggs are seen in spring and this is fall. The ones currently noted are in the McAllester pond at the east end of Hupi Road.

Plants

The conspicuous plants along the road now are Queen Anne's lace (white umbels) and asters: the beds of white wood asters and the fields of late goldenrods, which are also asters. The clumps of tall purple ones are New England asters.

— David P. McAllester

MERCURY RETROGRADE —SO WHAT?

The symbolism of the planet Mercury in a birthchart traditionally includes communications, transportation, clarity of rational thought, the readin' and writin' part of the traditional three R's in elementary education, elementary education itself, being of service, handcrafts and craftspeople, and the routines of our daily lives.

Quite a handful for a little planet dashing around in near solar orbit.

Mercury, known in Greek and Roman mythology as the messenger of the gods, completes its trip around the sun quickly, once every eighty-eight days. As it travels, we on earth see Mercury appearing to move backward for a period of about three weeks three or four times each year. That's called "retrograde motion," and Mercury's doing it now, September 22 – October 13.

Some astrologers say that when Mercury is retrograde, we should expect the areas of experience it symbolizes to be in an uproar. Any discomforts of Mercury retrograde are likely to be most keenly experienced when we are determined to keep everything moving on a strict schedule, or to see life through a dry, factual, purely rational lens.

So it's probably wiser, during Mercury retrograde, to expect the unexpected in those areas of life connected to Mercury, and welcome the unexpected with the dynamic combo of humor, faith, and intuition. For in Native American mythology Mercury is also Coyote, the Trickster, the one who fools us into chasing our own tails when we most need to laugh at ourselves. We can expect Coyote to be at play in our lives through Friday the thirteenth. Coyote's even at play with the date, so we might want to be prepared to enjoy things a-little-askew-from-the-ordinary. Even if it means that things get better than we ever expected, in somewhat illogical but actual ways.

This cycle of Mercury retrograde occurs in Libra, the sign of balance, law, harmony, and beauty. So for any of us involved in a Mercurial occupation (teaching, writing, publishing, craftswork—monk, butler, chauffeur, librarian, secretary, community service, etc.) or Libra work (the creation of beauty, justice, harmony; peacemaking, equality; balance) this can be a time of terrific breakthrough. Or it might just be a good time to schedule a vacation.

If you, like me, opt for a break in daily routine by way of an airline ticket "outtahere," just make sure you take an extra novel along in case your flight is delayed, and pack essentials in your carry-on luggage.

— MaryKate Jorda

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MONTEREY PROFILES

This interview was originally published in The Women's Times, *a regional publication for women in and around the Berkshires, and is reprinted here by permission.*

EDWARD ACKER

Karen Allen

As I sit on my mat in Karen Allen's beginning yoga class, I ask myself, What am I doing here? Karen has gently insisted that if I am going to interview her, I need to check out one of her classes in the newly opened Berkshire Mountain Yoga Center. I am a forty-six year old woman in an ongoing battle with my body, and sitting in yoga class to confront my limitations once again is not what I really want to do. However, it is hard for me to say no to that beautiful, open face of Karen's. I think she knows this.

To most people, that face is familiar because of the many films which Karen has been in over the years: *Animal House*, *Starman*, *Raiders of the Lost Ark* and *The Sandlot*, to name a few. Whenever we meet and have one of our gabfests, I'm always struck by a beauty that is her own, and owes nothing to artifice. In the six or seven years of knowing her, I've thought it unusual for this honest and open person to have made a success in a business that Karen herself refers to kindly as "not family friendly."

Sitting in the Berkshire Mountain Yoga Center in the big yellow barn behind the food co-op on Rosseter Street in Great Barrington, I look around at the space Karen has renovated, and get a feeling of light and fresh air. This is no accident. Karen studied design and continues to practice it through multi-colored knitting, which she teaches at the Interlaken School of Art in Stockbridge, and at Omega Institute in Rhinebeck, New York. From the look of this space, good design is an integral part of her life.

I ask Karen what she considers to be the successes in her life, and she has some surprising responses. "When I look back at my life, I see a series of things that were about surmounting some kind of overwhelming odds. I grew up with two sisters in a fairly straight-laced, strict, rigid environment. As daughters growing up during that period of time, I don't think we had a strong sense that our lives had a lot of value in the culture, except the value that we would grow up and probably marry some very nice man and become mothers."

Karen felt isolated as a child because her family moved almost every year until she was ten years old, due to her father's work for the U.S. Government. "I didn't have any ongoing relationships outside of my family. They were my whole universe in a funny sort of way. So I think my first success was the ability to conquer all sorts of expectations that were being foisted on me by my family and the world I grew up in, and to sustain a belief that my life as an individual person had value."

Buoyed by that strong belief and the influence of authors like Ayn Rand, Anaïs Nin, Cocteau, Henry Miller, and others, Karen left home to go to college in New York City. Afterwards, she travelled in Mexico, Central and South America. "I wanted to live in this world peopled by these artists who seemed to be experimenting with and enjoying their lives." It was early in her travels in Negril, Jamaica that she came across yoga and began a study which has continued for twenty years. She returned to the states and lived in Washington, D.C., where the twin threads of yoga and acting became intertwined.

It is clear that Karen views the success of her acting career as an example of how she overcame difficulties. As a young woman in her twenties living in Washington, D.C., Karen initially chose to be a writer. In looking back, she sees that this choice repeated the same kind of isolation she experienced as a child. "It wasn't a very good choice because I was a somewhat withdrawn person, kind of shy. What I actually needed for my development in life was something that would free me from that isolation."

By chance, Karen was taken to see Jerzy Grotowski's Polish Theatre Laboratory, one of the most important influ-

ences in modern theater. "It was literally like I walked in one person and out another. It changed my life. An actor began to cry at one point in the play, and he literally soaked his raincoat with his own tears. These actors were one hundred percent in the present moment. I walked out of the play that night and said to my friend, 'I want to study.'" For the next five years Karen studied with a company of actors who had been with Grotowski in Poland. They practiced yoga as part of the discipline and she studied privately with a teacher as well. "Good yoga and good acting is when people are in the present moment. That extends into my life. Good living is when you're in the present moment."

Like so many women in their forties, Karen sees herself in a transitional phase. For her it began in 1987, when she came to the Berkshires to study and act with Shakespeare and Company. She was at a point in her acting career where she was successful by most people's standards. But Karen sensed something was missing. She describes herself jokingly as a hamster running in circles. "I really wanted to act because I felt it was a way of connecting with others. But at a certain point, as you start to do films, you become separated from people. The difficulty is that it sometimes makes a person uncomfortable to be in your company because they have images tied to you. And to you it's just work. From my point of view, it feels like something I have to overcome in life."

Since that time, Karen has made and continues to make changes in her life. She is married to the actor Kale Browne and they have a son, Nicholas. Recently they made the decision to leave New York and Los Angeles and make their permanent home here in the Berkshires. Karen continues to act but finds that as a mother, the professional choices she makes are different than those she made when she was single. Apart from looking at each role in terms of her development as an actress, she evaluates the work for how it will affect her family. "You're sitting at home with your children one day and two days later get a call to go to Thailand for three months. The hours are excruciatingly long, and it's often a six day week. The choice you are faced with is: how good does a role have to be to remove you from your children to rehearse ten hours a day? It's important that the role and the work is worth the difficulty it creates in my family's life. In addition, when you reach forty, you start to look at yourself as a contributor to society. I want to find my place within community and find how I can make a contribution."

Karen's contribution to the community is a Center that offers an incredible array of teachers and classes. She believes that yoga can be beneficial to women because it is nurturing and there is no pressure to have a particular body image. "When you sit in a yoga class with other people, it's not like being in a gym or an aerobics class where everyone's checking each other out. People are there to be with themselves." It is obvious that Karen dearly loves yoga. "I would like to be practicing yoga when I'm eighty-five years old. It is how I heal myself and, in the healing, find the part that is able to help heal other people. When you can come to a place like that in your own growth, there seems to be a freedom to have an effect in life, not in a big way like being a movie star, but in a moment-to-moment reality with other people..."

In Karen's class, I struggle with stretching my body. She suggests to us that we think about the possibility of allowing space in our bodies, of breathing in and out and giving ourselves room inside. Karen cautions us not to push immediately to the limitations we feel, but rather to gently work with them and experiment with moving a little at a time. I realize that this is how Karen approaches everything she does in her life; in her acting, writing, design, and teaching, she is always striving for that moment of being fully present. "It's like bringing your instrument into tune. It's the most satisfying experience in the world."

— Nicky Heron

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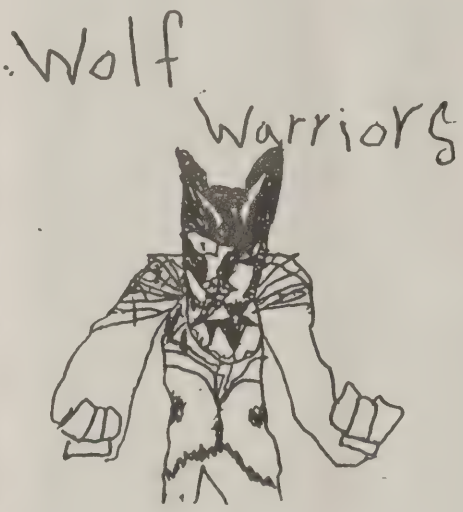
VOXED*

Long Gone Leo

I haven't seen Leo since early summer, but we send each other postcards and letters. The tornado took down a few trees up the hill behind his farmhouse with its dying breath. This was really nothing, considering, but his spirit ricocheted off the whole phenomenon—the high adrenaline, the airplanes and helicopters, the teevee, the mangled woods. He was gone by the end of June. The first week he worked alone cutting up the blowdown on his property—one truckload of sawlogs and many short walls of firewood stacked at random between the trees left standing; with power finally restored, he went back to work in his shop, completing some pierced and carved panels of red oak for a confessional in a Catholic church in Boston; then he packed his bedroll and a jar of peanut butter and hiked the path of the tornado east to west and back again, starting at his own place and sleeping out on top of Butternut (he said it was like climbing small, ragged mountains all day, the air dense with sap); then he rented his house and left for the Cape. He said he never once drove into Great Barrington.

Valya had work in Provincetown. Leo hung around for a week, spending his time with Valya when she wasn't working (that is, they had the mornings), with friends on fishing boats, and in bars, watching the stream of bus tourists and misfits build the electrical charge to thrilling levels at land's end. Then by extreme luck he found a dune shack rental, very rare on the Cape any more. Certain shacks built long ago way out on the dunes were allowed to remain when the place became a national seashore closed to further development. They are coveted places for artists to hole up in the warm



seasons. He wrote: "After I park my car, there is a long walk to the shack. Pine and oak beaten to its knees by the wind, and still growing ever so slowly, terrain of short rises and teacup hollows, sand everywhere. The shack is near the ocean but not within sight. Only now and then the sound of breaking surf. Here I am, out of reach again. What an effort it takes! How easy it is! I rest."

I write: "The prosecution does not rest. Here I am back home, *stealing* the time it takes to write you this postcard. There you are, pumping your water with a lever, walking the beach, counting sand. How do you do it? Why do I do it?"

The pictures on Leo's postcards are garden variety tourist Cape: beach babes, religious sunsets, dune buggies. The pictures on my postcards are arty, black and white, kind of embarrassing now that I think of it. Our correspondence takes weeks and months, because I'm so busy and Leo's a long walk from the P.O.

He writes: "You're a hard one. Let me guess: that line about 'the prosecution' I take as evidence that there's a recent rise in temperature from a certain Los Angeles courtroom. You always were a news junkie. Why don't you play some books on tape in your shop, and turn off the radio once in a while?" That postcard arrived in the same mail with another written in a tiny hand that filled all available space. I figure they collect until Leo makes a trip to the post office. The denser card read, in part: "You may think me pathologically wary of commitment, such as giving up blocks of time to a world other than that in my head, and you may be right—except for the "pathological' part. (You're such a *judge*.) But remember, a year ago I was a continent away, in a religious retreat among monks I didn't know from Adam. Now I'm a few hours down the pike, in a shack that floats on the dunes sure, but in a place, too, where Valya can join me after work, which she does."

I stopped at the Snap Shop next chance I had after I got that card from Leo, and bought some of those sticky postcard backs that make your own prints into postcards. I mailed him a picture I took of a railroad overpass on Route 9 in New York state. Some walking poet had painted a dark blue background on the concrete with a few white stars, and over the road the words: WELL MY FEET THEY FINALLY TOOK ROOT IN THE EARTH BUT / I GOT ME A NICE LITTLE PLACE IN THE STARS. These are not the best lines I ever read, but the long lens I used gives the passing traffic that slightly warped look of magnification, as if the wheels of all the cars were set about two degrees off the chassis centerline, pointing one way and moving another. I couldn't think of anything to write on the back.

— Peter Murkett

voxed (väkst) *past of* VOX, to give voice to, in writing, regardless. The verb may or may not take an object. For example, "She woke up voxed, and wrote" means the subject was given a voice and used it; "He voxed his readers senseless," means the subject used his voice so hard it hurt. There is no protection.

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LETTER FROM IONA

I am writing in the cool flush of the morning, sitting outside and looking across the still blue of the Sound of Iona to Ben Mhor in the distance, one of the lavender-coloured mountains of Mull. We are once again on this sacred spot, a tiny island in the Hebrides off the west coast of Scotland. It is three-and-a-half miles long and one-and-a-half miles wide, but it has had an historical impact that once transformed the world over 1400 years ago. It was here that Columcille, or St. Columba, settled after leaving Ireland, and founded a monastery which became a center of learning. From Iona he and his spiritual heirs were to spread Christianity and learning throughout Scotland and into Europe—France, Switzerland, and Italy—and centuries later their influence is still felt all over the world. Considering what a physical struggle it still is today to get here, the feat of those monks remains impressive to say the least!

The sun is now lifting the veils of mist in the distance, and silence fills space with a luminous peace. This has been broken only by the Abbey bell and the croaking of the island rooks. Walter and I are sitting by a wire fence over which some 650 fat onions are draped to dry. Through the fence we can see stooks of hay. White gulls and black rooks play chess taking turns commanding the tops of the hay.

This is my twenty-first visit to Iona—a commitment of approximately 120,000 miles in the last thirty years—and Walter's eleventh. Iona has been the inspiration for two of my books: *The Dove in the Stone* and *The Web in the Sea*. Iona puts a spell on people. Why? Hard to say. Perhaps it is the distillation of beauty and peace. As if they have taken refuge here from a world that is so busy denying both. (It is a reminder of how blessed we are to live in the Berkshires!) Perhaps it is because, as they say here, the veil is thinner between the visible and invisible worlds. It is clear that the Celtic vision is that there is another world, and it is hidden in *this* one. All one needs is the loving eye to perceive it. Nothing is hidden; it is we who are blind.

If the human task is to make the world conscious, then this small isle makes that work a bliss. Two days ago it stormed. Wind, lashing rain, buffeting the ears and chilling the face. Everything dripping: the sheep, the bracken, the rocks and stones. Still a bliss. Every grey pebble burst into jeweled colours: garnets, pearls, onyx, and emeralds!

We walked down to the jetty. The ferry thundered in with more pilgrims (thousands every year). At the Martyr's Bay, the only restaurant, we had hot pea soup, tea, and bread, and watched the windows steam and listened to the polyglot words of people from many different places, the rustling of parkas, dumping of backpacks, clomping of boots. And we read the English daily papers full not only of bad news but of a culture seemingly going down the drain: war, economic failure, sexpots, drugs, and murders—pandemic problems over here as well.

Well, reading them is the price, I tell myself, for the gift of this place. There are numerous spiritual centers here ranging from a small New Age Findhorn retreat house to the dominating presence of the worldwide Iona Community at the restored Abbey. There are Episcopalians, Presbyterians, Roman Catholics. There is a retreat house for Americans. Even a Buddhist bible in every room in our small hotel! In short, a great number of people of sincerity and good intention bent on praying and planning for a better world.

All this helps us realize that there is also an "Iona" in Monterey, and as magic as this place is, we will find much the same at home. It will be good to be back.

P.S. A bee just landed on the exact spot of the last period!

— Alice O. Howell-Andersen

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PERSONAL NOTES

Hats off to Monterey artist **Fred Lancome**, who donated his bronze statue titled "Surging Africa" to the Southern Regional School District in a gesture of support for District Superintendent Tom Consolati and the arts in our public school. Fred completed the sculpture in the early 1970s. It is a figure of a black man looking to the sky, arms at his sides, elbows bent, palms up. It was created as a statement against racism. Superintendent Consolati said, "We're very excited to have such a beautiful work of art for the school," and agreed with Fred that the sculpture will serve to make students think.

Very happy birthday wishes this month to **Rita Gottlieb** on October 1, to **Jim Gauthier** and **Mabel Sheridan** on October 2, to **Giuliana Raab** and **Noah Markwood** on October 4, to **Oriana Raab** on October 6, to **Tom Thorn** and **Marion Schneider** on October 9, to **Karen Shreefter** on October 11, to **Dave Quisenberry** on October 12, to **Jill Amstead** on October 19, to **Ian Rodgers** on October 22, to **Claire Mielke** on October 24, to **Elizabeth Orenstein** on October 26, and to **Debbie Mielke** on October 27.

If you have news items, birthdays, etc., that you would like to share, jot them down and drop them in the mail to me, just Route 23, or give me a call at 528-4519. Thanks in advance!

— Stephanie Grotz

ELEANOR KIMBERLEY

Margery Mansfield's (Mrs. Kelly Janes) cat at Hallowe'en.

MONTEREY GRANGE

The Monterey Grange No. 291 met on September 6 for ritual and bylaws review in charge of Deputy Peter Martin. At the meeting on September 20, installation of officers was postponed to October 18 due to illness of members. There was a variety program.

The recent fund raiser was a success, thanks all who helped. The Grange won first prize for its exhibit at the Blandford Fair, and will provide refreshments for the Monterey Health Fair on October 7. The Grange will sponsor Eleanor Kimberley in the Walk for the Homeless.

Next meeting is set for October 4, when the theme will be Mini Fair, with refreshments of garden leftovers.

— Fraternally,
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Winter hours for the Monterey Transfer Station will commence on Sunday, October 22, as follows:

Sunday 10 a.m. – 4:30 p.m.
Wednesday 8 a.m. – 1 p.m. (unchanged)
Saturday 8 a.m. - 1 p.m. (unchanged)

Stickers may be applied for and received by mail. Applications for authorized users' vehicles may be obtained at the Town Hall any time.

Stefan Grotz, Chair
Georgiana C. O'Connell
Peter S. Brown
Monterey Select Board

CALENDAR

Sundays, October 1, 8, 15, 22, 29 AA meetings, 9 a.m. in the Monterey Firehouse, Main Road.

Monday, October 2 Public Hearing on the local tax levy, 8 p.m. in the Monterey Town Hall.

Wednesday, October 4 Meeting of the Monterey Grange No. 291, 8 p.m. at the Grange Hall.

Saturday, October 7

Monterey Family Health Fair, 10 a.m.–2 p.m., Monterey Firehouse, Main Road.

Gould Farm Fall Country Fair, 4-9 p.m. at Gould Farm. A variety of activities, music by Vikki True & the Sweet Sisters of Mercy, The Big Waaagh Scratch Band, and Anson Olds. Tickets, $6 adults, $2 children under 16 at the door or advance at Roadside Store.

Sunday, October 8

The Indian in the Cupboard staged by the Actors' Theater of Maine, 2 and 6 p.m. at Monument Mountain High School. Information, 528-6378.

Annual Royal Hemlock Road Walk at The Bidwell House, 2 p.m., led by Bob Rausch. Information, 528-6888

Tuesday, October 17 Free flu shots, also pneumococcal shots, 9–11 a.m. in the basement of Town Hall, Main Road. (No blood pressure clinic.)

Wednesday, October 18 Meeting of the Southern Berkshire Solid Waste District, 7 p.m. in the church basement.

Monday, October 23 Public hearing regarding the site for the Monterey Transfer Station, 7 p.m. at Town Hall.

Saturday, October 28 Square and contradance at the Sheffield Grange, Route 7, Sheffield, 8:30–11:30 p.m. Music by Mountain Laurel, calling by Joe Baker. All dances taught, beginners and children welcome. Refreshments. Adults $5, children $2. Information: 413-528-9385 or 518-329-7578.

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Address your request for advertising rates and information to the Editor. For further information, telephone the Editor at 413-528-3454 evenings, or 528-9937 days.

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Contributions from local artists this month: Sudi Baker, pp. 10, 13, 14, 19; Riley Murkett, p. 20.

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